

Authentic Intimacy – Juli Slattery

Sexual Discipleship:

- We have been sexually disciplined by the larger culture
- There is no confusion of what the culture says about sexuality but there is a lot of confusion about what the Bible says.

Christian Approaches

- Silence
- Education
- Problem solving
 - o Sexual maturity doesn't mean the absence of symptoms
 - o We have to move them to wholeness in sexuality

What is sexual discipleship:

- Sexual discipleship is an intentional relational journey towards sexual wholeness.
- You can't address someone's sexual wholeness all by yourself. You are a piece of their journey.

Signs of sexual discipleship

- Honest God-honoring conversations about sexuality and sexual issues become normal.
- Christians can articulate a biblical explanation of God's purpose for sexuality.
- The body is activated in spiritual gifts, testimonies, and relationship
- Christians are moving toward maturity, not just moving away from sexual sin.
- The natural integration of sexuality with evangelism and discipleship efforts.

What explains the changes in sexual issues?

- The reason this happens in our culture is because we as human beings have chosen to worship created things instead of the Creator.
- Biblical sexuality is offensive because the gospel is offensive ... because it means that you are not your own god.

Cultural Narrative

- Why does sex matter? Because it's an important part of your identity and personal expression.
- Maturity = sexual experimentation and freedom
- Morality is based on respecting people's personal choices and freedom.
- 2 things you should never do: hurt somebody or getting in the way of someone's sexual freedom.

Cognitive Dissonance

- The feelings of discomfort that result when your beliefs run counter to your behaviors or new information.

A shallow theology will never stand up to cognitive dissonance

- For example: purity narrative
 - o Why does sex matter? Because it's an important part of following God
 - o Maturity = getting married as a virgin and keeping sex within marriage
 - o Morality is based on sexual abstinence

The gospel says that purity doesn't come through our sexual choices, but it comes through a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Your sexuality invites you to pursue intimacy. Your spiritual longings invite us to seek God.

Sexual intimacy is the ongoing celebration of our unity with each other. Worship is the ongoing celebration of unity with God.

Sexual faithfulness (exclusivity) is the promise to be true. God has promised eternal faithfulness to us and asks us to do the same.

No marriage in heaven? Why? Because we don't need the metaphor when we have the reality.

You can't talk about homosexuality and have it make sense without taking people on a journey like the one we've been on the last few hours.

If you can paint the picture for them that their sexuality is a picture of a profound spiritual truth it is a whole different conversation

Biblical Narrative

- Sexuality was intentionally created by God to be a metaphor teaching us about His covenant love.
- God has an adversary that works to destroy this holy metaphor.
- Jesus came to redeem humanity, including our sexual sin and brokenness.
- Maturity = continued dependence on the Holy Spirit to live according to the spiritual metaphor of holy sexuality, single or married.

Porn problem is actually about procrastination. You're afraid of failing and asking for help.

Practical Application

- Get comfortable with sexual conversations.
- Listen for the spiritual issue before you respond to the sexual question.
- Remember that it's a journey toward Christ. Lay aside your agenda in the moment.
- Use special, natural and relationship revelation together to steer toward truth.
- Discipleship happens in the Body. Don't isolate.

The gospel is written in sexuality. God designed us as sexual beings so that we can know and understand His commitment of love towards us and in order to find wholeness and healing we need to devote ourselves to 4 things: God's Word, applying wisdom, healing relationships, and personally knowing Jesus.